Department of State

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 PCA-01
TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 /082 W

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R 301250Z JUN 82
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3127
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 4805

E.O. 12065: GDS 6/26/86 (LAWRENCE, L.) OR-AMB
TAGS: PINT, JM
SUBJECT: THE AFTERMATH OF THE COUP PLOT

REF: KINGSTON 4699

1. (C) SUMMARY: THE CONTROVERSY AROUND THE ALLEGED COUP PLOT IN JAMAICA CONTINUES TO GROW. THE OPPOSITION HAS ALLEGED THAT THE PLOT AMOUNTS TO NOTHING MORE THAN ONE FURTHER ATTEMPT BY THE GOVERNMENT TO DISCREDIT THE JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP). COLUMNISTS IN THE INDEPENDENT PRESS HAVE COME TO THE JLP'S DEFENCE AGAINST CHARGES OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT BY POINTING OUT THAT THE OPPOSITION FELT CURE TO WIN THE UPCOMING ELECTION AND WOULD GAIN NOTHING FROM A COUP. A COLUMNIST IN THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED PRESS WRITES THAT THE CONSPIRACY IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE CIA'S TACTIC OF DESTABILIZATION. IN THE MIDST OF ALL THIS, THE ABSENT SOMETIME-NATIONAL SECURITY MINISTER HAS RETURNED TO JAMAICA. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) THE ALLEGED CONSPIRACY BY A GROUP OF 26 MEMBERS OF THE JAMAICA DEFENCE FORCE (JDF) AND THREE CIVILIANS TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT OF JAMICA HAS BECOME THE MOMENTARY FOCUS OF ATTENTION IN ELECTION POLITICS WITH ALL SIDES TAKING PREDICTABLE STANDS. THE JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP), LAUNCHING WHAT IT OBVIOUSLY CONSIDERS A COUNTER-ATTACK AGAINST THE PROPAGANDA PLOY, BLASTED THE RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) IN A FULL -PAGE ADVERTISEMENT IN THE JUNE 26 DAILY GLEANER, LISTING A SERIES OF EIGHT "PLOTS" WHICH HAVE OCCURRED SINCE 1976, AND IN WHICH THE PNP TRIED TO IMPLICATE THE JLP (UNSUCCESSFULLY) THE JLP AD ALLEGED THAT THE COUP IS NOTHING MORE THAN ONE FURTHER EFFORT BY THE RULING PARTY TO SMEAR THE OPPOSITION. WHILE FAILING TO PROVIDE ANY DETAILS ON HOW THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT HAVE ARRANGED THE CONSPIRACY, THE POLITICAL ANNOUNCEMENT WARNS THE PUBLIC TO BEWARE OF SUCH MACHINATIONS BY THE PNP.

3. (U) COLUMNISTS AND AN EDITORIAL IN THE INDEPENDENT DAILY GLEANER TOOK MUCH THE SAME VIEW AS DID THE JLP IN THEIR AD. THE EDITORIAL IN THE PAPER QUESTIONED SEVERAL FEATURES OF THE EVENTS; (A) THE TIMING OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COUP, COMING AS IT DID AFTER A VIOLENT SPEECH BY MANLEY DENOUNCING THE JLP ELECTION TACTICS; (B) THE APPARENT WITH-HOLDING OF INFORMATION FROM THE FREE PRESS WHILE THE GOVERNMENT MEDIA IMPLIED THE JLP WAS SOMEHOW INVOLVED IN THE CONSPIRACY; AND (C) THE DETAILS WITH WHICH THE INCIDENT WAS BEING REPORTED ON RADIO MOSCOW WELL IN ADVANCE OF INFORMATION BEING AVAILABLE IN JAMAICA. GLEANER COLUMNIST DAWN RICH, A CONSTANT CRITIC OF THE PNP, DISPARAGES THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PLOT AND ASKS WHY, WITH AN OVERWHELMING LEAD IN THE POLLS, THE JLP WOULD WANT TO PLAN A COUP D'ETAT. FRANKLIN MCKNIGHT, ANOTHER GLEANER WRITER, PURSUES MUCH THE SAME LINE OF REASONING.

4. (U) THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED JAMAICA DAILY NEWS, SHOULD BE EXPECTED, CARRIED A DIFFERENT VIEW OF HOW THE EVENTS SHOULD BE SEEN. IN A BALANCED EDITORIAL, THE PAPER ASKED THAT ALL HEED THE WORDS OF JDF CHIEF OF STAFF BRIGADIER ROBERT NEISH AND AVOID SPECULATION AND POLITICS UNTIL THE INVESTIGATION OF THE EVENTS IS COMPLETE. HORACE LEVY, ONE OF THE PAPER'S COLUMNISTS WHO IS A FREQUENT CRITIC OF THE U.S., LOCKED THE CONSPIRACY TO A CIA PLOT TO DESTABILIZE THE JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT. RECOUNTING WHAT HE BELIEVES ARE INCIDENTS OF CIA INTERFERENCE IN OTHER COUNTRIES, LEVY CONTINUES BY WRITING THAT, "NOW, LIKE IT OR NOT, JAMAICA IS THE BATTLEGROUND." THE COLUMN ENDS WITH LEVY WARNING HIS READERS THAT THEY MUST STAND UP AGAINST CIA INTERFERENCE.

5. (U) IN THE MIDST OF THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING THE ALLEGED CONSPIRACY, DUDLEY THOMPSON, JAMAICA'S ERSTWHILE MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY, RETURNED TO THE ISLAND JUNE 25. SEVERAL LEFTIST GROUPS HAVE ORCHESTRATED A CAMPAIGN FOR HIS RETURN (COMMENT: AS THOUGH HE HAD BEEN BANISHED FROM THE ISLAND) SINCE HIS DEPARTURE FOR "MEDICAL TREATMENT" IN CUBA ON JUNE 16. PRIME MINISTER MANLEY HAD ORDERED THOMPSON TO RETURN AS SOON AS HIS HEALTH PERMITTED. AT A RALLY, AFTER DEFENDING THOMPSON, MANLEY SUBSEQUENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT THOMPSON WAS BEING GRANTED ANOTHER THREE [illegible] OF "8: ( )3-;3" (PRESUMABLY TO BE SPENT IN JAMAICA, THOUGH THAT IS NOT CERTAIN.)

6. (U) WE ARE SENDING A SEPTEL UPDATING THE HEAVY MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE ALLEGED COUP.

7. (C) COMMENT: THE CONTROVERSEY AROUND THE COUP CONSPIRACY SHOWS PLAINLY HOW LITTLE THE TWO POLITICAL PARTIES IN JAMAICA TRUST EACH OTHER. THE JLP REFUSES TO BLIEVE THAT A SERIOUS THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY EVER EXISTED, WHILE THE RULING PNP IS SEEKING TO LINK THE PLOT TO THE OPPOSITION. THE REFUSAL OF MANY TO TAKE THIS "NIGHT CLUB COUP" SERIOUSLY IS INDICATIVE OF THE VAST LACK OF TRUST IN THE GOVERNMENT. ONLY BECAUSE OF UNIVERSAL RESPECT FOR BRIGADIR NEISH DID PEOPLE GENERALLY CONCEDED THAT THERE WAS, INDEED, SOME KIND OF ZANY COUP PLOT IN EXISTENCE.
LAWRENCE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY RB DATE 25 JUN 1982
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. [illegible] E.O. 12(a)
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